THE PREMIER'S GRAND TOUR OF THE PEOPLE'S PLUCK

As a tonic to defeatists, Mr. Churchill, in his broadcast of April 27, recommended a tour of those British towns which have been the most savagely bombed—since, as he said, "it is just in those very places . . . that I have found the morale most high and splendid." That the country is solidly behind its fighting Premier is evident from many photographs like that above taken during a recent visit to Liverpool. It was scenes of such loyal affection, oft-repeated, on the part of common folk, which made him exclaim: "Of their kindness to me I cannot speak, because I never sought it or dreamt of it, and can never deserve it."

Photo, "Daily Mirror," Exclusive to THE WAR ILLUSTRATED

Bitter Indeed Were the Last Hours in Greece

After putting up a magnificent stand against tremendous odds, the British and Anzac troops composing the Forces of the Empire were evacuated from Greece. Here we tell something of the end of a campaign which, given reasonable odds in the air, might have had a very different conclusion.

WHEN the Greeks could fight no more —when their troops were utterly exhausted by the days and weeks of continuous battle, when their ammunition and their supplies had been used up, their transport blown to pieces, their planes (few, so very few, even at the beginning) driven from the skies—then, outflanked, surrounded, and overwhelmed by the enemy masses, they sent a message to their allies.

"This state of things," read this note from the Greek Premier communicated to the British Minister at Athens on April 21, "makes it impossible for the Greeks to continue the struggle with any chance of success, and deprives them of all hope of being able to lend some assistance to their valiant allies." The continuation of the struggle, while incapable of producing any useful effect, would have no other result than to bring about the collapse of the Greek Army, and bloodshed useless to the Allied forces. "Consequently the Royal Government is obliged to state that further sacrifice by the British Expeditionary Force would be in vain, and that its withdrawal in time seems to be rendered necessary by circumstances and by interests common to the struggle."

First definite news that the Imperial troops were leaving the Greek mainland was given by Mr. P. C. Spender, Acting Australian Treasurer, when at Sydney, on April 28, he stated that "the evacuation of certain of our troops from Greece has begun. As far as this has proceeded, it has been successful." The withdrawal was by no means easy, for the Empire troops were in close contact with the enemy in the Thermopylae position. Moreover, the Nazis had obtained complete command of the air, and by repeated attacks had made the one good port available, the Piraeus at Athens, unusable. "Consequently"—we are quoting from the special communiqué issued by G.H.Q., Middle East, on May 1—"a re-embarkation had to take place from open beaches, against continual enemy pressure on land and heavy and repeated attacks from the air. In such circumstances the withdrawal of large numbers of troops can be effected only at the cost of heavy losses of vehicles and equipment, while rearguards which cover this withdrawal may have to sacrifice themselves to secure re-embarkation of the others." The British and Anzacs who composed the rearguard put up a tremendous fight against the Germans, displaying almost reckless bravery, sacrificing their own lives in order to enable their comrades to get away. At the same time Greek infantry, who knew well that they had never a chance of escaping from the country, strove to cover the British flank—a last splendid service rendered by our most gallant ally.

Grim pictures of the withdrawal were painted by German spokesmen. "The remnants of the fleeing British troops are now trying to escape from various harbours in Greece, in barges, fishing boats, and all sorts of vessels, leaving behind arms, war material, and equipment of all kinds. A large number of vessels have been sunk, and many others damaged. Many sailing boats and other vessels have been bombed and machine-gunned, some on the beaches and some at sea." Remnants of the British forces were stated by Berlin to be arriving at Alexandria in small fishing smacks; "the condition of the soldiers is pitiful." A broadcaster from Berlin said that the formidable effect of the German air attacks on British transports was indicated in reports from Athens that "innumerable bodies" had been washed ashore. This time the B.E.F. (he went on) had not had the advantage of persistent fog as at Dunkirk, and the journey to Crete was much farther than across the English Channel. The Luftwaffe was resolved not to allow the repetition of "glorious Dunkirk,"

THE NEAR EAST is now the principal war zone. Greece has been evacuated by the Allies, and the Greek Government moved to Crete on April 23; the photo shows King George of the Hellenes making one of his last appearances in Athens when he spoke to his people from a balcony at Army H.Q. Note in the map the chain of Greek Islands off Asia Minor, which are being snapped up one by one by the Nazis. *Map, Courtesy of "The Times"; Photo, Keystone*

Once Again the 'Few' Did Heroic Work

Greek liaison officer explaining point of next attack to R.A.F. bomber-pilots. Top: Fighter pilots enjoying a moment's respite from their bitter struggle against heavy odds. Full figures of enemy 'plane losses over Greece are not available, but 16 German destroyed as against our 7 on April 20 is indicative of British aerial efficiency.

R.A.F.—R.I.P. Wreckage of the 'plane, the cross, and Greek soldiers who dug this grave compose a poignant symbol of the Anglo-Greek alliance; here is the resting-place of the first two British airmen to die in Greece. Right: Air-gunner in rear turret of an R.A.F. bomber. Though all too few the R.A.F. played a vital part in the successful evacuation of the Forces of the Empire, in spite of the fact that towards the end of this operation the Germans were using no fewer than 860 aircraft.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; and Planet News

All Greece Overrun by the Nazi Hordes

and so the position of the armed forces was represented as being "quite desperate."

Hardly less grim was the statement by Mr. A. W. Fadden, Acting Australian Premier. "The Imperial forces are conducting themselves with great heroism in the face of heavy enemy pressure. The task entrusted to our forces has been carried out with fidelity. Many of our troops have now left Greece after stubbornly contesting the enemy's advance, even to the last few inches of Greek soil. Unfortunately, we cannot hope to avoid casualties . . ."

Here is a description of the final fighting by a German war correspondent, quoted by Berlin radio on April 29. "Behind Thermopylae German tanks were unable to take the main road to Athens because of its destruction by British troops. They had to take the mountain passes and tracks which had never seen motor vehicles before, and moved slowly along the coast in a south-easterly direction. The road was frightful, and there was not a second's rest. All night long the German column moved ahead. Nowhere were the English to be seen, but caution had to be exercised as we did not know where they might suddenly jump on us.

"As the morning lengthened we reached Thebes. South of the town the British rearguard opened fire on us, while the British batteries, which had been well concealed, began firing. This obstacle had to be by-passed, and since the main road and all bridges ahead were destroyed, we again made a detour into the mountains towards the east. German scouting tanks suddenly reported by radio that British troops had been sighted. But we did not want to meet and engage them, so we again turned north-east, away from this area, into the mountains. In this way the outskirts of Athens were reached."

German troops approached the Greek capital from three directions, from Thebes to the north, from Corinth (which was captured on April 26 by German parachutists, together with 900 British troops, "some of whom were so taken by surprise that they had to be hauled out of houses"—so the German account), and from the island of Euboea on the east. Every precaution had been taken to prevent German planes from landing on the Athens airfield; it had been mined and vehicles were strewn all over the landing ground. "German parachute troops, however, overcame these difficulties, and the airport was quickly cleared." Besides mining the airfield, the British, so the Germans reported, offered a last-minute resistance; but so that there should be no excuse for the destruction of the beautiful city, the Imperial troops withdrew just before the Germans entered. As the last British soldiers left, they were cheered by large crowds who bade them not good-bye but au revoir.

German troops entered Salonika, which was not defended and from which all stores had been either withdrawn or destroyed, on April 9, 1941. Here is the first photograph to reach this country of Nazi mechanized units in the town. Numerical superiority in machines again enabled the Nazis to advance with great rapidity.

"The surrender of Athens," said a German account, "took place in a small dark café at the edge of the inner city. The Greek general, Kamenos, the Police Chief of Athens, and the two mayors of Athens and the Piraeus, surrendered the Greek capital." One of the first actions of the conquerors was to impose a curfew at 11 p.m. and 6 a.m. They also set up a Quisling government under a certain General Tsolakoglu.

While the evacuation of the Imperial troops was still in progress, Mr. Churchill made a statement to the House of Commons in London. Up to the time when evacuation was seen to be inevitable, he said, we had landed about 60,000 men in Greece, including one New Zealand and one Australian division. Of these, at least 45,000 had been already evacuated—a remarkable feat when it was considered that our Air Force had had to abandon the air fields from which alone it could effectively cover the retreat of the troops, and that only a small portion of it could cover the ports of embarkation.

"The conduct of our troops," went on the Premier, "especially the rearguard, in fighting their way through many miles to the sea, merits the highest praise. This is the first instance where air-bombing, prolonged day after day, has failed to break the discipline and order of the marching columns, who, besides being thus assailed from the air, were pursued by no less than three German armoured divisions, as well as by the whole strength of the German mechanized forces which could be brought to bear.

"In the actual fighting," the Premier continued, "principally on Mount Olympus, around Grevena, and at Thermopylae, about 3,000 casualties, killed and wounded, are reported to have been suffered by our troops. This is a very small part of the losses inflicted on the Germans, who on several occasions, sometimes for two days at a time, were brought to a standstill by forces one-fifth of their number."

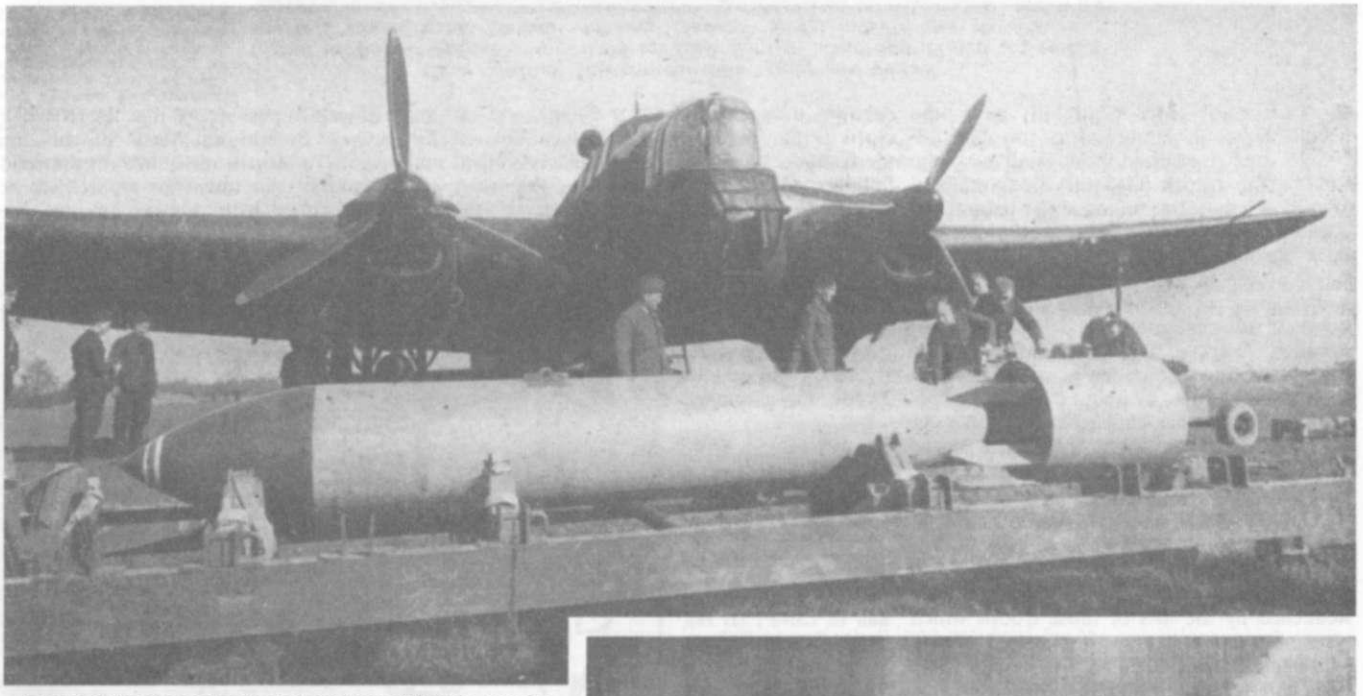
"At least 80 per cent of the original force," said the statement issued by G.H.Q., Middle East, to which we have already referred, "has been safely conveyed to areas where it can undertake further active employment." This operation, the statement went on, had been made possible only as the result of great skill and devotion by all three arms of the services, in particular of the rearguards, and by the Royal Navy and the Merchant Service, the Royal Air Force and the Fleet Air Arm.

"It is noteworthy that in spite of the heavy fighting they have been through, and the trying experiences of re-embarkation under such conditions, troops which have returned from Greece are entirely unperturbed by their struggle against such odds, and are convinced of their superiority over the Germans, both as individuals and as units and as formations. The successful withdrawal of so large a proportion of these invaluable troops is a noteworthy achievement.

"The troops have all retained their fighting equipment as well as their fighting spirit, and the heavy equipment and transport which have been lost will soon be replaced."

GREEK REFUGEES are seen in this photograph (transmitted by radio) walking behind their belongings, piled on a horse-drawn cart, through a line of halted Nazi tanks. As in France and the Low Countries, so in Greece, the homes of poor peasants were wrecked by the swarms of Nazi dive-bombers. *Photo, Associated Press*

Bigger and Better Bombs to Bring Victory



An idea of the size and power of our newest bombs may be gathered from this monster weighing 2,000 lb. It is being loaded into a Whitley heavy bomber.

BRITAIN'S growing strength in the air is the most hopeful factor in the present stage of the war. Our new bombs are not only causing havoc in Germany, but giving the Nazi leaders more than a headache. We hold the record for the biggest and most powerful bomb yet, one designed by Squadron Leader R. H. Garner. Having created this weapon, he flew with it to Germany and dropped it on Emden. "He had gone," said Lord Beaverbrook on April 23, "in pursuit of aviation, to see the bomb straight through to its final destination. That was the bomb which created so much interest in Germany and this country. It was the biggest bomb ever flung out of a bomber."

Members of the R.A.F. get ready to "give it to them back." They will soon be over enemy territory with another load.

Squadron Leader R. H. Garner, the bomb-designer, one of the "boys in the back room," is an officer in the Development branch of the Royal Air Force.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Central Press, Associated Press and Keystone

IN BERLIN, columns of smoke are seen pouring from the State Opera House after a heavy raid by the R.A.F. on April 9. The attack was the heaviest so far, all the fire-brigades being called into operation. Yet Goering told the German people that the war would never reach their capital!

The Nazis Just a Little Nearer the Nile

After their spectacular career through Cyrenaica, General Rommel's armoured columns have crossed into Egypt. There, however, they are making much slower progress. Maybe the natural difficulties in their path are proving unexpectedly strong, or maybe some new move, even more daring, is under way.

NOT until Mr. Churchill gave the figure in his broadcast on April 27 was it realized how small were the forces with which General Sir Archibald Wavell—" that fine commander whom we cheered in good days, and whom we will back through the bad "—smashed Mussolini's power in North Africa and took an Italian army of 180,000 men captive. " In none of his successive victories," said the Premier, " could Wavell maintain in the desert or bring into action at one time more than two divisions, or about 30,000 men."

No wonder, then, that when the call came to us from Greece—when " Hitler, who had been creeping and worming his way steadily forward, doping and poisoning and pinioning, one after the other, Hungary, Rumania, and Bulgaria, suddenly made up his mind to come to the rescue of his fellow criminal "—the British force in Libya was seriously weakened by the loss of those troops which were sent across the sea to the aid of our supremely valiant ally, now assailed by the two empires of the Axis. Moreover, the bulk of our armoured forces, which had played so decisive a part in defeating the Italians, were withdrawn from the line to be refitted, and only a single armoured brigade was left to hold the frontier.

Then came the German invasion of Libya. The Nazis' advance was made sooner and in greater strength than our generals had expected. The armoured brigade was worsted ; tanks were captured or destroyed, supplies had to be burnt, and considerable casualties were suffered—quite early in the push the Germans claimed 2,000 prisoners. The British infantry, which did not exceed one division, had to fall back, said Mr. Churchill, " upon the very large Imperial force that had been assembled and had to be nourished and maintained in the fertile delta of the Nile." Day by day the German columns drew ever nearer to Egypt, and on April 27 they were reported to have crossed the frontier. On the next day they occupied Sollum. Only Tobruk, far to the rear, maintained a stubborn resistance. If the British had not suffered a really serious military defeat, at least they had experienced a psychological reverse.

Having crossed into Egypt, the Germans made slow progress across the desert which lies between Sollum and Mersa Matruh, the main centre of British resistance on the road to Alexandria. The town was reported to be strongly fortified, with the sea on one side and on the other the huge Qattara depression, which—at least, it was hoped—would prove an impenetrable barrier to the German tanks. As the fortress of Tobruk was strongly resisting—it could hardly be regarded as beleaguered, since access to it was open by way of the sea—General Rommel, the Nazi commander, had to detach considerable forces to mask it and, if possible, to effect its capture. One great tank assault on the place was completely defeated on April 17, and a second, launched on May 1, was similarly unsuccessful. Then far to the south German tanks were reported to have arrived in the Kufra oasis ; there was talk of a German armoured division which had been " lost " in the desert, and which, it was suspected, might be making its way across the sands to the Nile valley, hundreds of miles to the south of Cairo. Such a dash across the desert is what we have learnt to expect from our experiences of Hitler's strategy ; true, some

Control of the Nile is part of Hitler's megalomaniac dream of world-conquest. Advancing from Libya he may attempt several routes across the desert : (1) from Jarabub to Cairo ; (2) the line to Asyut ; (3) from Kufra to Isna. Route (4) branches from (3) leading to Aswan, the town famous for its great Nile dam.

Courtesy of the " Daily Express "

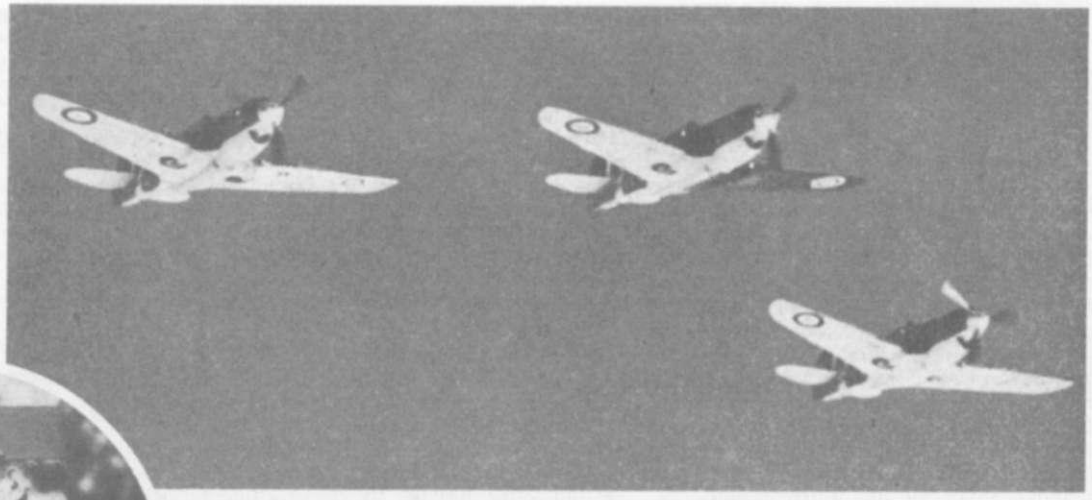
After taking many thousands of Italians prisoner, the British army loses a handful of soldiers to Mussolini's fellow-dictator. Lined up under armed guard they were among the 2,000 claimed to have been captured on the Libyan front by the Nazi Tank Corps.

Photo, Associated Press

General Annabile Bergonzoli, who commanded Italian forces at Bardia and was taken prisoner by us at Agedabia, convalescing in a military hospital. When captured he was in poor health, suffering from incipient appendicitis.

Photo, British Official : Crown Copyright

'Hellish Struggle' in the Western Desert



The Curtiss Tomahawk, known in America as the Hawk 81-A, is already in service with the R.A.F. in the Middle East (see page 448). Three Tomahawks, low-wing cantilever monoplanes of the single-seater fighter type, are seen, right, in formation.

Below, General Sir A. Wavell is seen with General de Gaulle, who arrived in Cairo during April after visiting Free French units in the Middle East.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright

suggested that it would be impossible for the Nazis to maintain their lines of communication, but (it may be asked) what have lines of communication to do with a column of tanks which carry with them their own fuel, water and munitions?

All the same, conditions in Libya are now distinctly unpleasant, and are becoming increasingly so.

"It is getting terribly hot now in the Libyan desert," wrote Mrs. M. G. Beadnell, wife of an official of the Egyptian Desert Survey Department, who has spent much time in the Western Desert, in the "Daily Telegraph" on April 24; "and sand storms are blowing up with ever greater frequency and violence. The enemy tanks and armoured cars will be subject to incessant delays from the penetration of the sand into every particle of machinery, with more sand blowing into the engines as one lot is dealt with. The wheels will plunge into pockets of soft clay and sand. When heat and thirst are very great it becomes increasingly difficult to swallow food. The sun beats down on the back of the neck and makes head and eyes ache—then sunstroke."

One German radio reporter has described the "hellish struggle" experienced by Rommel's advanced units, after the guns of the British garrison in Tobruk had forced them to abandon the coastal road and make a bypass to the south. "Many vehicles were lost in the desert," he said. "Many men rejoined their units after spending several days and nights in the desert, without food and drink—subjected to sweltering heat by day, to frost by night, to attacks by low-flying British aircraft and raiding motorized forces, and to the 'death hail' of British naval guns." His description ended with the words, "Compared with conditions of that coastal road, the worst fields of Poland seemed paths of paradise to old campaigners."

That, perhaps, is a picture painted deliberately in sombre colours. The Germans have long prepared for the conditions which their troops are now experiencing in the Western Desert—have not their soldiers, wearing full equipment, been exercised for hours in hot-houses? And if accounts speak true, many of the natural difficulties are being overcome by the use of the Junkers 52. At the end of April a Canadian pilot spotted at Benina aerodrome, near Benghazi, 100 of these giant troop-carriers, lined up wing-tip to wing-tip.

"It seemed as if they had just landed," he said, "for there were groups of soldiers stepping out." Diving to 50 feet from about two and a half miles up, the Canadian flashed along a line of German aircraft, while his gunner "gave them all he had." One of the aircraft burst into flames, and smoke poured from others. "The soldiers were, apparently, too startled to raise their tommy-guns. They just closed up like pen-knives and toppled to the ground."

"I should be very sorry to see General Wavell's armies to be in the position of the German invaders," said Mr. Churchill in his broadcast. But as yet the Nazi threat to Egypt and the Canal is a very real one.

The Egyptian army has been expanded and modernized of late years. Below, Egyptian mobile artillery is exercising in the desert.

Photo, Keystone

Tanks of the German Afrika Korps are here moving along a road in Libya. Profiting by the Royal Navy's preoccupation with convoying troops to Greece, the Nazis landed many tanks in Africa.

Photo, Keystone

Just What Are These 'Panzer' Divisions?

What is this mighty instrument of war that the Germans, if they have not invented at least have developed to an unprecedented degree—this armoured force which smashed its way across Poland, France and the Balkans, which drove the British out of Libya, and is now feeling its way across the Egyptian deserts? Below we give some details of Hitler's Panzerdivisionen, and of the counter-measures designed to halt their progress.

A PANZER division—Panzer is the German word for "armoured"—comprises 400 tanks, divided into two brigades of two battalions each, but in addition to the tanks, each division contains a brigade of infantry carried on motor lorries; a reconnaissance unit of motor cyclists; a regiment of field artillery; an anti-tank battalion; a heavy machine-gun battalion; an engineer battalion, equipped for bridge and road construction and repair; and a mobile repair and supply unit. Furthermore, it has attached to it a squadron of aircraft for reconnaisssance and dive-bombing operations. Altogether, the number of vehicles is about 3,000, all motor-driven, and the number of men is some 14,000. But perhaps the most important fact about a Panzer division is that it is *a self-contained unit*, it is capable of acting on its own and does act as an individual army, receiving its direction from the divisional commander, who rides with his staff in the H.Q. armoured vehicle.

Germany has 15, or perhaps 16, of these armoured divisions, representing a total strength of more than 6,000 tanks. Three of the divisions are reported to be in Libya, and seven are believed to have been engaged in the fighting in the Balkans. Four sufficed to crush Poland, and ten triumphed in the Battle of France.

In each division there are usually heavy, medium, and light tanks. The fast light and medium models range from 18 to 20 tons; each is equipped with a 37-mm. gun (100 mm. are a little short of 4 ins.), and 2 machine-guns, and its armour is about 30 mm. in thickness. It carries a crew of three. The heavy tank, which the Germans seemingly are coming to prefer, is a cruiser with a road speed of about 30 miles per hour. It weighs about 36 tons, but there has been talk of monsters of between 70 and 100 tons. Its armour is some 50 mm. thick, and it carries a 75-mm. gun and two machine-guns. It has a crew of five, and can carry a heavy load of ammunition. A model PZWK 6 shown in Berlin in 1939 had armour 50 to 60 mm. thick and carried two guns of 75 mm. or 105 mm. and a 47-mm. anti-tank gun; its crew numbered eight.

When going into action the Panzer division seeks to outflank, rather than to make a frontal attack. If, however, it is not possible to work round the enemy the motor cyclists and the light motorized unit probe the opposing defences, searching everywhere for a soft spot. As soon as this is found a wedge is driven in by dive-bombers and heavy tanks.

Once the line is penetrated, then the tanks spread out like an opening fan; and behind them, through the gap which they have caused, pour the rest of the Panzer division. Far and wide throughout the countryside speed the motor cyclists and the light tanks, the heavies, the flying artillery, spreading confusion and destruction. The enemy communications are first threatened, then disrupted, severed, smashed. The civilian population are driven from their homes and become panic-stricken mobs. The opposing troops are cut off into isolated pockets of resistance, which may continue firing hours after the main battle has swept past and beyond them; they are left to be dealt with by the motorized infantry. So what was once a nibble has become a thrust; what was once a crack is now a breach, through which rushes a flood of armoured troops not to be withstood.

Not to be withstood—at least, not by lines of defence, by trenches and concrete positions, such as are the delight of the military engineer, who thinks still in the terms of the battles of the last war, of the Somme and of Arras, of Cambrai and Ypres. Nor are they to be withstood by those masses of infantry which still, to most people, constitute an army. It has been said that if the Yugoslavs had mobilized their millions, if Wavell had been able to send hundreds of thousands of men into the Balkans—then Greece would not have been overborne; there is still talk of the million Turkish bayonets which bar Hitler's way to the oilfields of the Middle East. But such suggestions, such talk, belong to yesterday. Millions of men armed with rifles and bayonets cannot stop Hitler's Panzerdivisionen: if they are flung into the battle against these armoured hordes they are doomed to be ground beneath the tractors into a bloody pulp. Even if they were supplied with masses of artillery, with thousands of anti-tank guns, even if they were supported by armadas of aircraft—still there is every reason to believe that the tanks, moving in unison under the direction of one audacious brain, would cut their way through to victory. Only one thing can beat the tank divisions—tanks, more tanks, directed with yet more skilful generalship, moved by a supremer audacity. Thus it is not too wide of the mark to say that the battle against Hitler's Panzerdivisionen will be won in Britain's workshops.

The rapid advance of the German forces in North Africa was due mainly to the fact that they had succeeded in transporting vast quantities of tanks to Libya. Above, German tanks being shipped from an Italian port. Right, Nazi tanks in a Tripoli street.

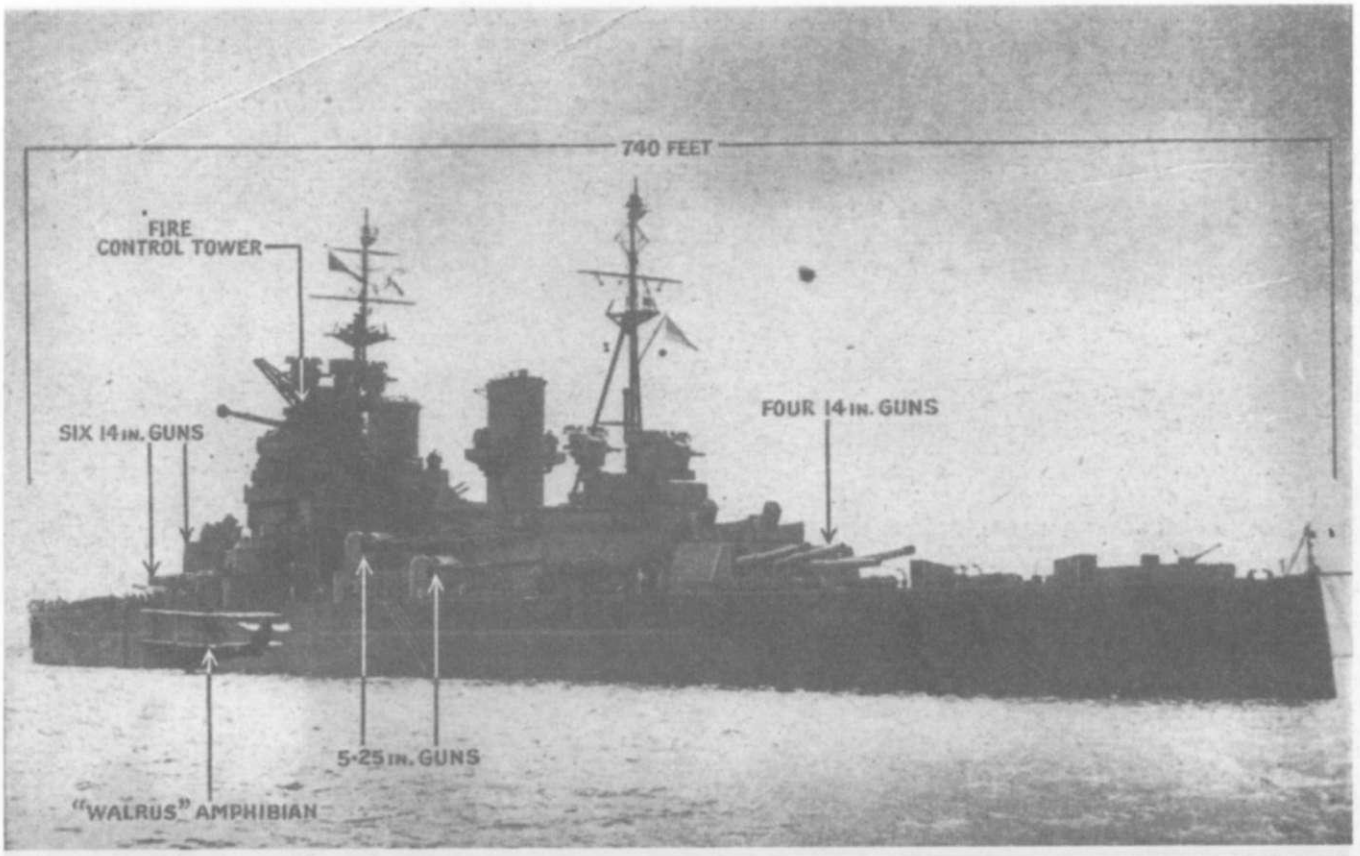
Photos, Associated Press and "Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung"

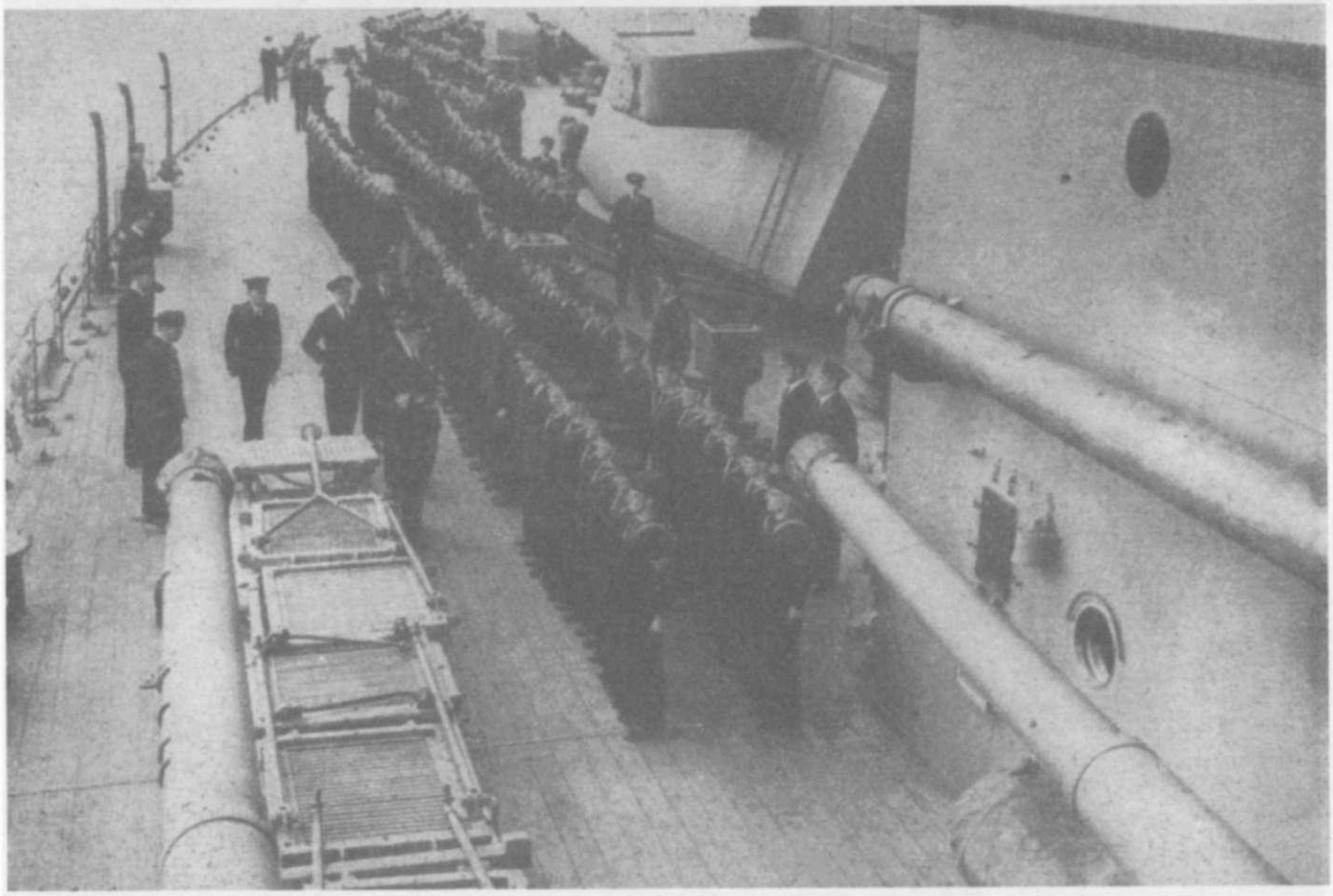
Britain Has Tanks as Good as Hitler's!

BRITISH TANKS are playing a big part and will play an ever-growing part in the war. Our Armoured Divisions have lately been reorganized, and now form one of the most powerful instruments of war. In the light of experience changes have been made in the types of vehicles used, and both in gun-power and armour our mechanized forces are believed to be equal to anything Germany can put in the field. In a recent mock invasion test more than ten thousand vehicles of every kind were used.

Photo, Fox

Yet Another to 'Make Her Mightier Yet'

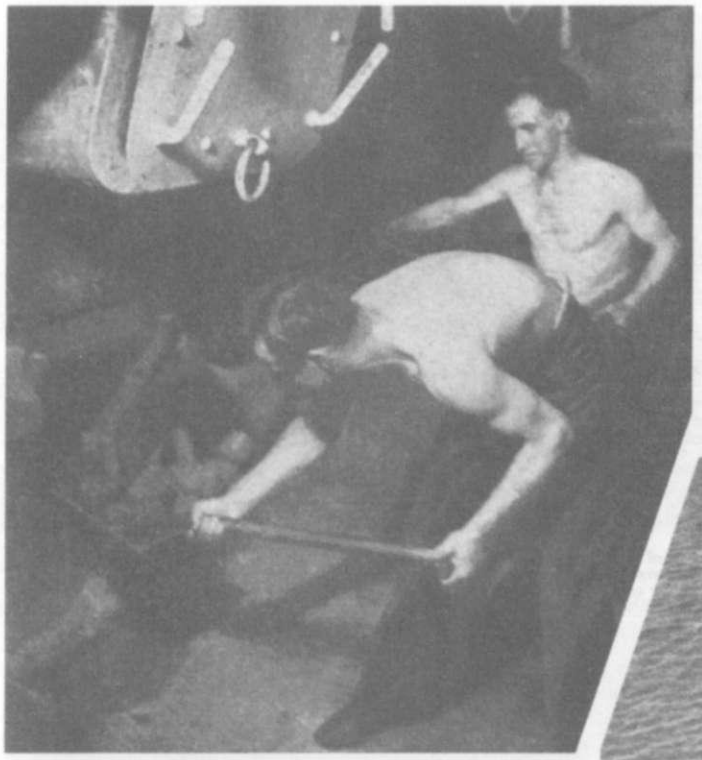




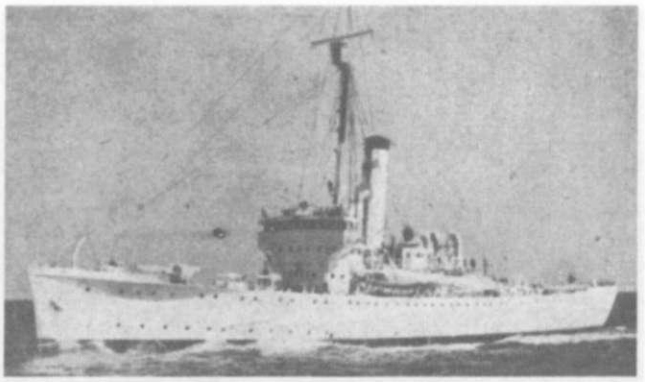
H.M.S. PRINCE OF WALES, sister ship of H.M.S. King George V (see pp. 294-5 in this vol.), is already in commission and hard at work. She is seen, top, with a crane hoisting one of her three 'planes out of the water. Above, her Captain is inspecting some of the ship's company during "Divisions." The Prince of Wales, laid down in January 1937, has a displacement of 35,000 tons, a speed of about 30 knots, and a main armament of ten 14-inch guns. These guns are of a new model with an effective range greater than that of the 15-inch guns mounted in earlier ships.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright

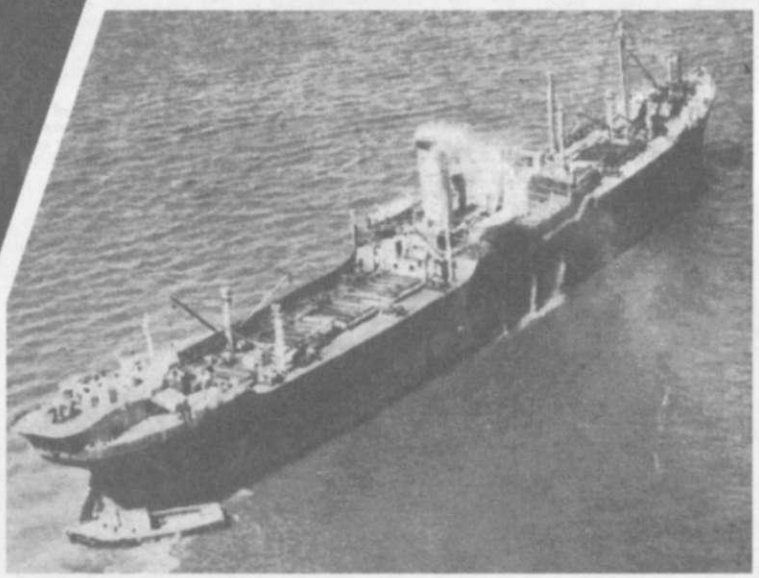
America Has Her Part in the Atlantic Battle



Between fire and water, menaced by mines and bombs, stokers aboard a minesweeper do their bit to keep the Atlantic "lane" open for our shipping.



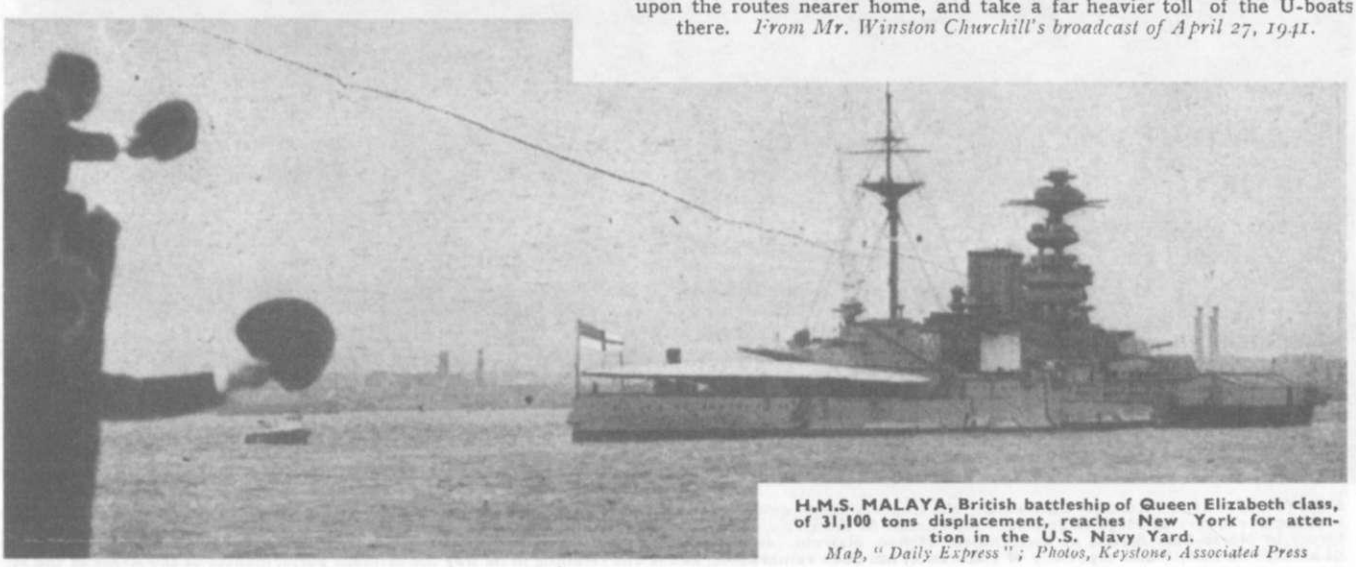
THE CHELAN is one of ten similar U.S. cutter-destroyers sent to the aid of Britain; she displaces 1,983 tons. Below, British freighter, Empire Attendant, arrives battle-scarred at New York.



How the United States could maintain a "safety zone" for shipping as far as Greenland, and thus help to guarantee our vital war supplies almost half-way across, this map shows.

THE PRESIDENT'S TREMENDOUS DECISION.

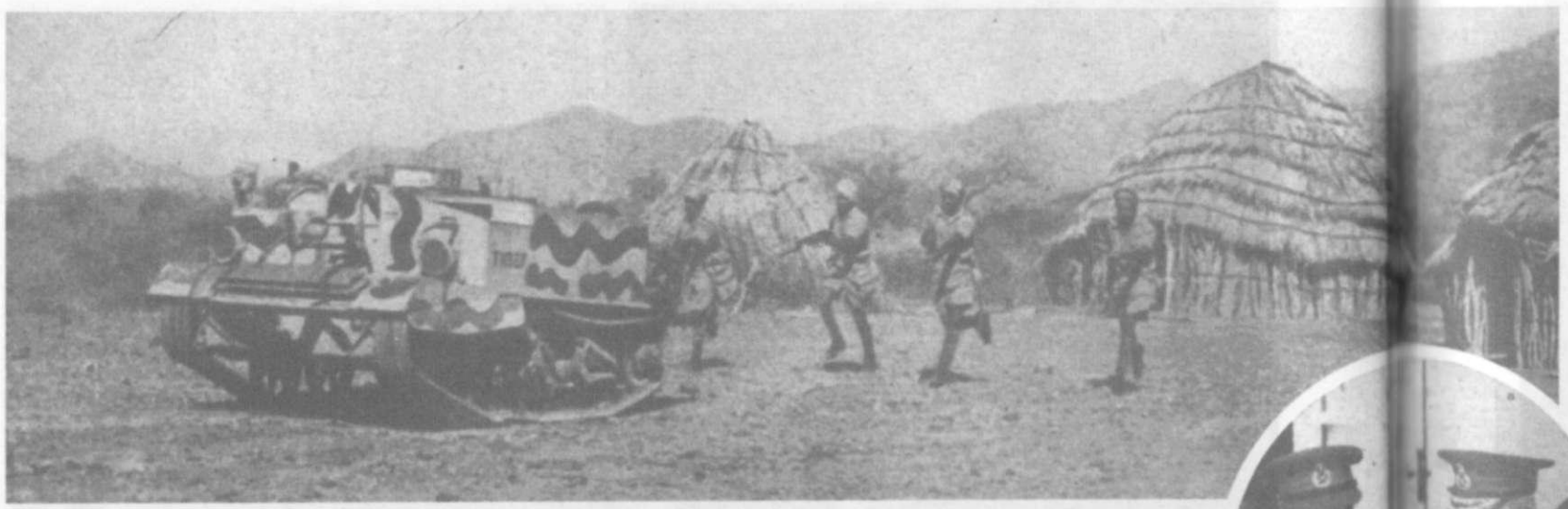
IT is the Battle of the Atlantic which holds the first place in the thoughts of those upon whom rests the responsibility for procuring victory. It was therefore with indescribable relief that I learned of the tremendous decision lately taken by the President and people of the United States. The American Fleet and flying-boats have been ordered to patrol the wide waters of the Western Hemisphere and to warn the peaceful shipping of all nations outside the combat zone of the presence of lurking U-boats or raiding cruisers belonging to the two aggressor nations. We British will, therefore, be able to concentrate our protecting forces far more upon the routes nearer home, and take a far heavier toll of the U-boats there. *From Mr. Winston Churchill's broadcast of April 27, 1941.*



H.M.S. MALAYA, British battleship of Queen Elizabeth class, of 31,100 tons displacement, reaches New York for attention in the U.S. Navy Yard.

Map, "Daily Express"; Photos, Keystone, Associated Press

Battling Across East Africa's Barren Uplands, Beneath a Pitiless Sun, The



INDIAN TROOPS IN ERITREA have fought their way across hundreds of miles of mountainous country and, side by side with British troops, have written a glorious new chapter in the history of the Indian Army. Indian mechanized cavalry, infantry and engineers have been in the van of operations in Italian East Africa, and above some of them are seen clearing a village. On the right an armoured car finds the going difficult in the country around Keren. Bottom right, Indian troops stationed at a road junction where an Italian lorry lies on its side.

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Britain Forced to Take Action in Iraq

In an earlier page (see page 310 of this volume) we have written of the great strategic and economic importance of Iraq and Iran at the present stage of the war. Since then events in Iraq have moved swiftly, as will be seen from what is told below.

To London on April 4 came the news that German intrigue had succeeded in engineering a coup d'état in Iraq through the agency of Sayid Rashid el Gailani, former premier of pro-Axis sympathies, supported by four senior officers of the Baghdad garrison, all fervent Pan-Arabists, and almost certainly assisted by the Mufti of Jerusalem, Haj Amin el Husseini, who, since his expulsion from Palestine, has been deeply engaged in political intrigue in both Iraq and Syria.

FAISAL II, the boy king of Iraq, gardening with the assistance of an aide-de-camp. *Photo, Black Star*

By one sudden stroke, choosing a moment when Parliament was in recess and the Regent, Emir Abdul Ilah, absent from the capital, this cunning politician turned out the Prime Minister, General Taha el Hashimi, deposed the Regent, and seized power. He then re-established himself as Premier and installed a new Regent to govern the country in the name of the little six-year-old King Faisal II. In language somewhat reminiscent of the Nazi dictator, Sayid Rashid stated in a broadcast that the army had entrusted him with the responsibility for the preservation of peace and order and the safeguarding of the Constitution against any excesses.

The deposed Regent, who is an uncle of the young King, protested vehemently in a broadcast from Basra. "Heedless of Iraqi public opinion," said he, "Sayid Rashid has seized power by instigating rebellious elements, who have adopted falsehood as a weapon, and who are an instrument in the hands of foreigners who, in order to enjoy the benefits of the country, seek the destruction of its independence."

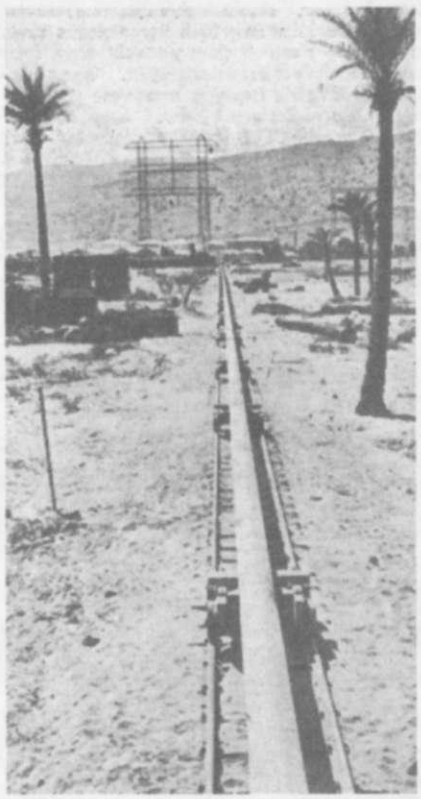
From Damascus, through Vichy, came reports that Sayid Rashid had formed a military cabinet, in which he is the only civilian, while his colleagues include the Chief of the General Staff, the Commander of the Mechanized Brigade, the Commander of the Iraqi Air Force, and the Director of National Defence.

The situation remained obscure and gave rise to considerable uneasiness until April 19, when it was announced in London that strong Imperial forces had arrived in Basra "to open up lines of communication through Iraq." This is in accordance with Article 4 of the 1930 Treaty of Alliance, which provided that if Great Britain should be involved in war the King of Iraq would undertake to furnish "all facilities and assistance in his power, including the use of railways, rivers, ports, aerodromes and means of communication," and authorized the British Government to maintain air bases and troops in his territory in order to protect lines of communication.

The landing of British forces made the situation less disquieting, but mystery was deepened by the announcement that "the new Iraqi Administration, true to the initial assurance given by Sayid Rashid, are affording full facilities, and have sent a high officer to Basra to welcome the British Officer Commanding and to collaborate with him in making all arrangements."

It was to be expected that the local population, "who have happy memories of British and Indian soldiers from the last war," would give our troops the warm welcome that is reported, for they have little to do with the political intrigues of their rulers. But the final smooth paragraph of the official announcement carried a suggestion of the iron hand within the velvet glove: "The co-operation of the Iraqi authorities in the execution of this movement has made a favourable impression in London and leads to the hope that more normal relations between the two countries may soon be established."

Emir Abdul Ilah, Regent of Iraq (left), was deposed recently through the machinations of Sayid Rashid el Gailani (right), a cunning politician with pro-Axis sympathies. *Photos, E.N.A.*



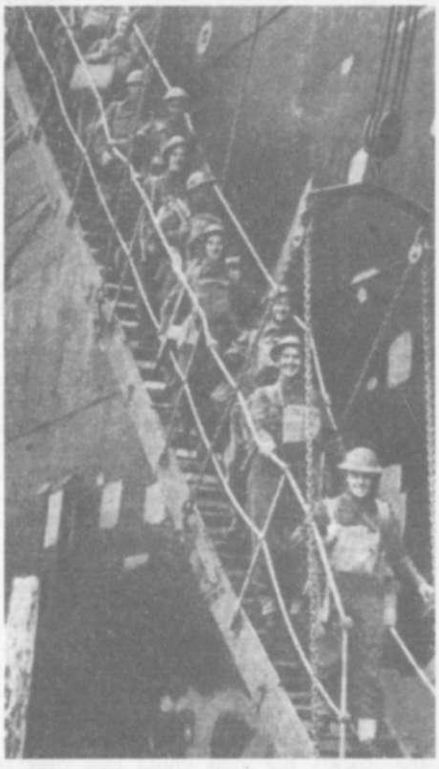
OIL-FIELDS AROUND KIRKUK have long attracted covetous glances from Germany, whose oil problem is a real one. British troops have gone to guard them. *Photo, E.N.A.*

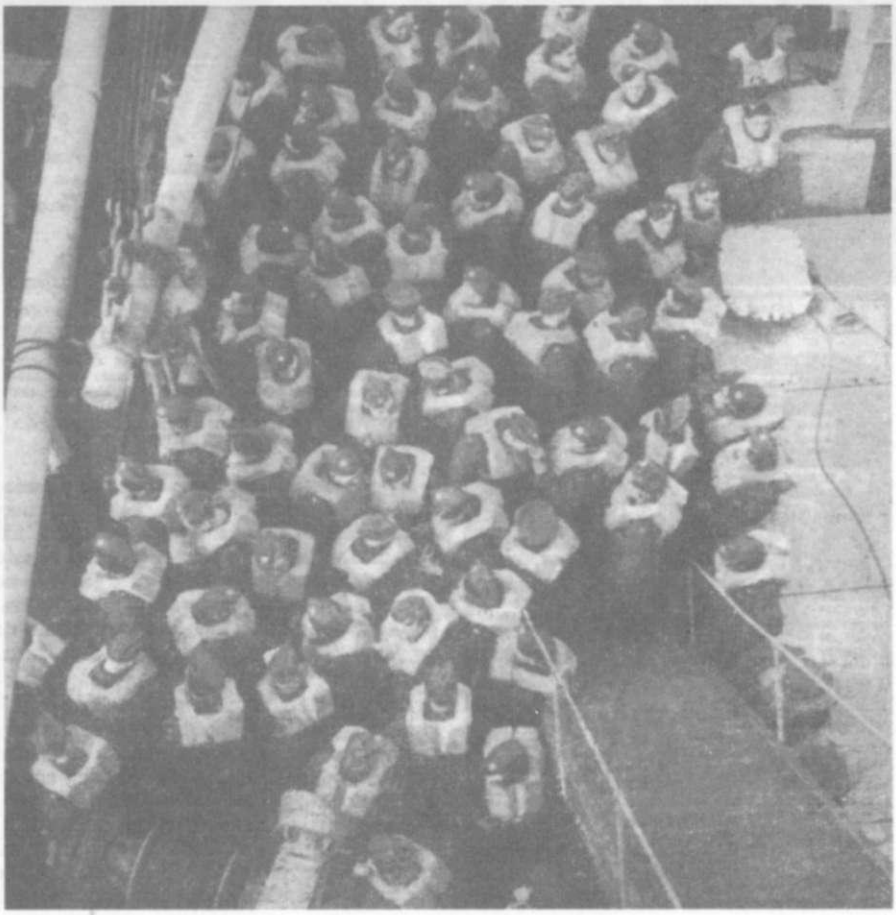
The landing of British troops was received in Ankara with the greatest satisfaction, and in Germany with deep chagrin. Authorities in Berlin characterized the move as a breach of international law. A commentator on the German radio said: "Great Britain has selected Iraq and the Persian Gulf as a further region for the extension of the war." The Berlin "Borsen Zeitung" was even more bitter: "This is quite in accordance with the century-old British practice. An independent Arab State is militarily raped to achieve what could not be attained by the intrigues of London diplomacy—namely, the recruitment of a new blood donor for the British war and new support for the tottering Empire."

Later the official attitude in Baghdad became less cordial, and, when informed by the British Ambassador, Sir Kinahan Cornwallis, that further British troops were to arrive in Basra, the Iraqi Government took the line that this would not be permitted until those previously landed had passed through and out of the country. Britain refused to accept this strange interpretation of the terms of the Treaty, and the troops reached Basra without difficulty. Moreover, the Iraqi Government was requested to remove concentrations of mechanized forces from around the aerodrome and R.A.F. training school at Habbaniya, 60 miles west of Baghdad.

This request was not only ignored but the Iraqi troops were reinforced, and early on May 1 they opened fire on the cantonment, compelling British forces to take counter action. It was later reported that Sayid Rashid had appealed to Germany for help against a British "invasion."

They Went to Greece to Honour Our Bond





SIXTY thousand men who could ill be spared from other theatres of war were, thanks to the Royal Navy, taken safely across the Mediterranean that we might honour our pledge to the gallant Greeks. In this page we have glimpses of life aboard a British troop-ship. Top, troops keeping fit with physical drill; right, a party parading for lifeboat drill; above, men disembarking on Greek soil with the customary British smile.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright

Is There Any Need to Worry about Gibraltar?

As Hitler's grandiose scheme for the ejection of Britain and Britain's Fleet from the Mediterranean takes shape, it is becoming ever more likely that an attempt will be made on Gibraltar—if Franco's Spain can be induced to grant free passage to the German troops. In this event, what sort of stand would "Gib" make?

As night falls on Gibraltar it brings with it the military ritual of the Ceremony of the Keys. Through the steep and narrow streets of the old town tramp the soldiers with bayonets fixed, to the music of fife and drum or perhaps the skirl of the pipes; down to the gates they go, and there the ponderous portal is locked and the key carried back by the Key Sergeant to the Government House, where it is laid beside the Governor's plate at dinner.

So it has been for more than two hundred years, and so it will continue to be, for the fortress of Gibraltar—we have every reason to believe—is impregnable, with its gun emplacements carved out of its rocky face, its magazines far underground, its storehouses and deep shelters, its miles of galleries, and its bristling defences of every kind. Months of bombing and bombardment could do little more than chip and scar the Rock's surface; its heart would remain undented. New guns, we are told by Moscow radio, have recently been mounted, and—so the same source says—the Rock is now an island, a deep trench, impassable by tanks, having been cut across the isthmus by Canadian soldiers. Nor could its garrison be starved out, since stocks of food to last two years and more have been accumulated, and the great "catchment areas" provide a sufficiency of fresh water.

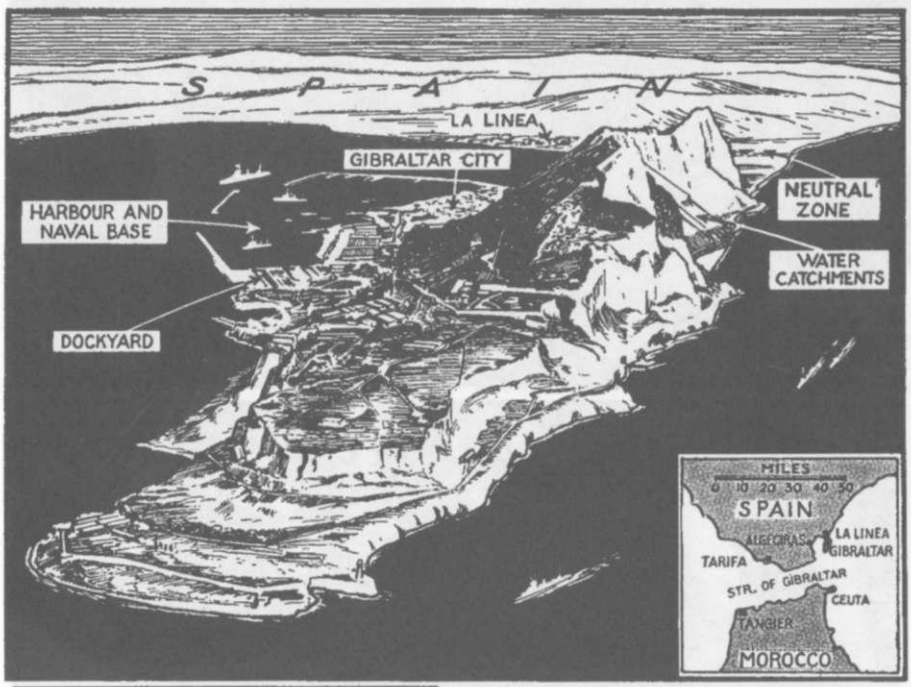
Once in its history the Rock stood a three years' siege, from 1779 until 1782, when General Eliott, with 5,000 men, successfully beat off every attack delivered by a combined army of French and Spaniards. Perchance "Gib" is destined to be besieged again; then Hitler's tanks and dive bombers, his parachutists armed with flame-throwers and tommy-guns and demolition charges, will be beaten off just as the floating batteries employed in the siege of long ago were destroyed by Eliott's red-hot cannon balls and incendiary shells.

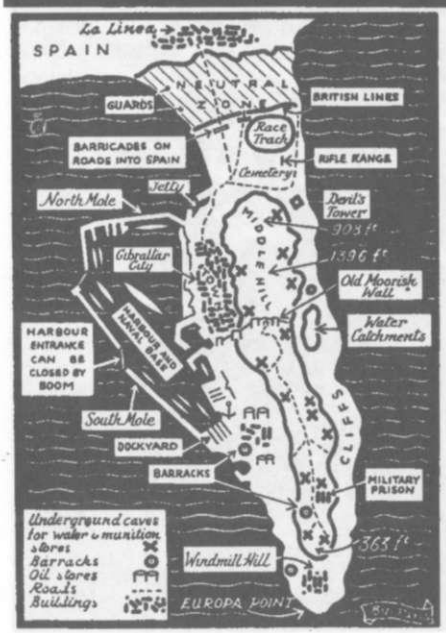
But Gibraltar is more than a fortress; it is also a great naval base, and it can hardly be maintained that the harbour, which lies on the western side of the Rock looking across the Bay of Algeciras to the Spanish shore, is invulnerable. Theoretically, at least, it would be an easy matter for guns mounted on the Campo, as that shore is called, to make the harbour untenable for our warships and to destroy the town which lies above its quays. Big guns have been reported to have been established on the Campo, seven or eight miles distant; and aerodromes in Spain are only a few minutes' flying-time away. But if the harbour could be attacked—and it can be—the guns of the fortress could also hit back. Gibraltar's armament, ranging from 9·2-inch guns to the latest 3·7-inch A.A. guns, can put up a terrific fire; and the hostile artillery across the bay would provide an easy target. It might well prove, then, that the harbour could be and would be kept open as a base for Cunningham's ships.

Whether the Straits of Gibraltar could be kept open is another matter. Between the Rock and Ceuta, immediately to the south in Africa, the Straits are 15 miles wide, but opposite Tarifa, some 20 miles to the west on the Spanish coast, they are only eight miles wide. The guns of Gibraltar, then, can hardly be said to control the Straits any more than the German guns at Calais control the Straits of Dover; in the one case as in the other it would be possible for convoys to slip through under cover of the opposite coast, with the added protection of smoke screens. The most they could do would be to harass passing shipping. Heavy guns mounted near Tarifa, however, firing in conjunction with guns on the Moroccan side of the Straits, *might* close the waterway, since they would not have to fire at a maximum range of more than 8,000 yards—say, four and a half miles. But, even so, ships might run the gauntlet, particularly at night.

At the worst, the fortress of Gibraltar might be invested and its garrison contained or bottled up, while its harbour was denied to our fleet. More likely, perhaps, is it that the Rock's big guns could cast over the base a protecting mantle of fire. And if the harbour remained in service, then the ships which use it would be able to sally forth to the protection of our convoys, moving east or west through the Straits. Moreover, land power might come to the aid of sea power; in other words, territory on both sides of the Straits would be occupied by our military forces, so as to ensure that the narrows should remain open to our ships.

GEN. LORD GORT, V.C., who, it was announced on April 26, has been appointed Commander-in-Chief of Gibraltar in succession to Lieut.-Gen. Sir Clive Liddell. *Photo, L.N.A.*





'THE ROCK,' whose salient features are marked in this map and plan, may be attacked at any moment. Its power of resistance has been much strengthened recently by detachments of Royal Canadian Engineers' tunnelling companies, many of the men being expert diamond drillers. *Diagram specially drawn for* THE WAR ILLUSTRATED *by Felix Gardon. Plan by courtesy of the "Daily Express"*

Whatever Storms May Blow, Ready Aye Ready!

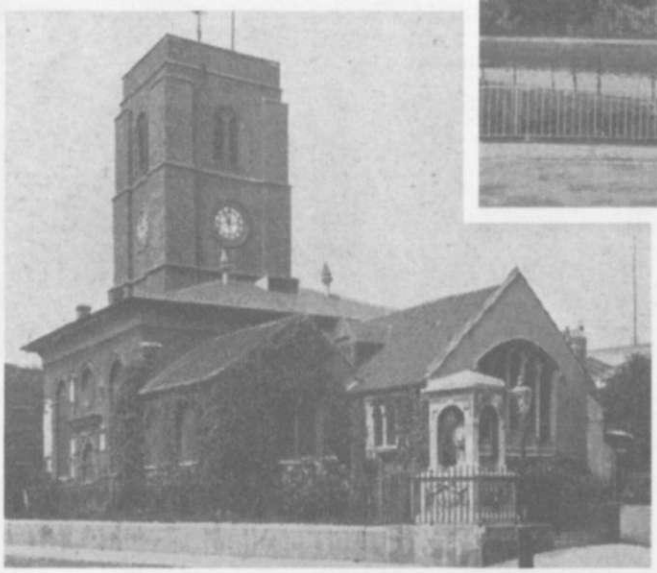
GIBRALTAR AND BRITISH SEA POWER are almost synonymous terms, for while our ships can be based on the great fortress harbour we hold the western entrance to the Mediterranean. Small wonder, therefore, that Axis policy should envisage an attack upon this vital position. The Rock of Gibraltar, here seen from the deck of a British battleship, is connected with the Spanish mainland by an isthmus 1½ miles long and ½ mile broad. The harbour of 260 acres can accommodate the British Mediterranean fleet.

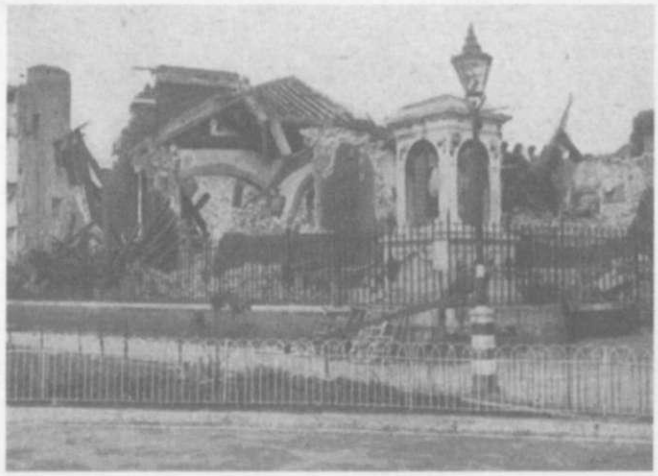
Photo, L.N.A.

Our Searchlight on the War

Chelsea Old Church No More

ALL SAINTS, Chelsea, better known as Chelsea Old Church, now laid in ruins by German bombs, dated in part from the early 14th century, although the tower and west end were not built until 1667-70. Up to 1824 it was the parish church of Chelsea; in that year it became a chapel of ease to the new parish church, St. Luke's. Chelsea Old Church was closely associated with Sir Thomas More, who lived near by, and it contained the More Chapel, and also, in the chancel, a monument which he caused to be erected in his lifetime and for which he wrote the inscription. Tradition states that after his execution in 1535 his headless body, buried first at the Tower, was re-interred here. The Church was partly restored in 1910. In 1922 there was discovered, behind the monument of Sarah Colville, the earliest painted glass window in London, its preservation from the 14th century being due to the bricking-up of the window containing it. Chelsea Old Church contained some interesting chained books, including a "Vinegar" Bible. A canopied tomb at the south-east corner of the churchyard is a monument to Sir Hans Sloane, the physician (died 1753), who gave his name to Hans Place and Sloane Street. It is still standing, and is shown in both the photographs above.





CHELSEA OLD CHURCH, here seen before and after its destruction in the German air raid of April 16-17, was built early in the 14th century and contained many ancient monuments.
Photos, Will F. Taylor and Sport & General

Lindbergh Resigns

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S recent attack on Mr. Lindbergh as an "appeaser," in which he referred to him as a "copperhead," the name of a deadly viper, has resulted in Lindbergh resigning his commission as colonel in the United States Army Air Corps Reserve, and in the announcement later that the War Department had accepted the resignation. In his letter, which was sent to the Press some time before it reached White House, Lindbergh said he had hoped to be able to express his point of view to the American people in time of peace without giving up the privilege of serving his country as an Air Corps officer in time of war. But, since the President had implied that he was no longer of use as a reserve officer, and in view of the imputations on his loyalty, character and motives, he could see no other honourable course open to him than to resign. It was in 1927, a month after his famous flight from New York to Paris, that Lindbergh received his commission. It remains to be seen whether he will return the Order of the German Eagle with which he was decorated by Goering in 1938 at Berlin.

R.A.F. Grow More Vegetables

MANY R.A.F. stations have for some time been growing much of their own food in adjoining spare ground. This admirable activity has now been intensified and made more widespread through the appointment by the Air Council of a technical adviser on horticulture. The first Air Ministry Gardening Officer is Mr. A. H. Whyte, a former student of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Edinburgh, late Horticultural Adviser to the Shropshire County Council, and himself a practical gardener. He will tour the R.A.F. stations, studying and solving their individual problems of vegetable production. He will advise units how to obtain grants for ploughing up new land and for the purchase of tools, seeds and fertilizers. He will work in liaison with catering inspectors and station welfare officers of the R.A.F., and will co-ordinate the gardening activities of the Service with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and other relevant bodies. Produce will be sold direct to the station messes at cut prices, a constant supply of fresh vegetables being ensured.

Interned Nazis Escape

ON April 18 twenty-eight German airmen, prisoners of war in an internment camp set in the wilds north of Lake Superior, escaped by tunnelling under the fences. The region is without roads or habitations, so it was not surprising that sixteen of these were quickly recaptured. Of these one was shot and wounded by a patrol, while three surrendered to a foreman employed by the C.P.R. who was armed only with a shovel. After a few days all but six had been rounded up. Most of the men were glad to be retaken, for bitter weather and lack of food had reduced them to a condition of great wretchedness. There was reason to believe that the escape, which had been carefully planned, was by way of being a "dress rehearsal" for goal-breaking on a large scale in celebration of Hitler's birthday on April 20, but that the vigilance of the camp guards prevented this.

Three Days in a Dinghy

FIVE airmen, the crew of a bomber, recently spent three days and two nights in their dinghy in the North Sea. They had dropped bombs on their allotted targets in Germany and been hit by A.A. gunfire. Over the enemy coast the 'plane caught fire and the crew had to abandon it. The dinghy was flung out, the five scrambled on to it and began to paddle furiously westwards. Dawn broke. All that day aircraft flew near and one even saw them, but could not find them again as the sea was rough. Those who were not using the paddles had to keep bailing the water out of the rubber dinghy with their leather caps. Suddenly "we noticed black objects on the water and others just under the surface." They had entered a minefield.

Later on the third day they were spotted by a Hudson aircraft. Flying low, it dropped a bag containing brandy, biscuits and cigarettes. Soon afterwards there arrived a Hampden, which dropped a sound dinghy into which the exhausted crew scrambled with thankfulness. "Then," said the pilot, "we heard the pleasantest sound of all. It was the chug-chug of a motor, and just before it got dark we saw a naval cutter coming up. Directly it got to us the sailors threw down a rope ladder, but we had to be hauled aboard like seaweed."

ENEMY AND BRITISH AIR LOSSES
From the Beginning of the War
September 1939—March 1941
(Air Ministry revised figures)

	Enemy	British	Pilots saved	
Over Britain				
Sep.-Dec., 1939	23	—	—	
Jan.-Dec., 1940	3038	847	427	35 by A.A. first year.
Jan.-March, 1941	133	13	2	
	3194	860	429	
West Front Campaign				
Sep.-Dec., 1939	14	5	—	
Jan.-June, 1940	943	374	—	Includes Dunkirk.
	957	379		
Scandinavia				
Apl.-June, 1940	56	55	—	
At Sea				
Sep. 1939-Dec. 1940	33	37	—	
Jan.-Mar., 1941	4	Nil		
Enemy and Occupied Countries				
Sep.-Dec., 1939	20	26		
Jan.-Dec., 1940	45	349		
Jan.-March, 1941	23	115		Figures for pilots saved unknown.
	88	490	—	
Middle East				
June-Dec., 1940	421	78		Mainly Italian; 114 destd. on ground or captured.
Jan.-March, 1941	792	64	4	Mainly Italian; 411 destd. on ground or captured.
	1213	142	4	
Totals: Europe and Middle East	5545	1963	—	

Germans have admitted the loss over Britain of 3,100 machines and 7,000 airmen up to March 1941.
From April 1-30 German aircraft shot down over Britain numbered 112, 87 at night.

The Nazis Can't Beat the Spirit of Drake!

A heavy death roll was the result of German raids on Plymouth, which had five severe attacks in nine days. Above, Lady Astor, M.P., Lady Mayoress of Plymouth, leads mourners at a mass funeral for the victims. Centre is Admiral Sir M. E. Dunbar-Nasmith, V.C., C.-in-C., Plymouth.

PLYMOUTH bears many honourable scars following the intensive bombing of the city by the Nazis. Here is a scene in an industrial thoroughfare following one of Plymouth's heavy raids.

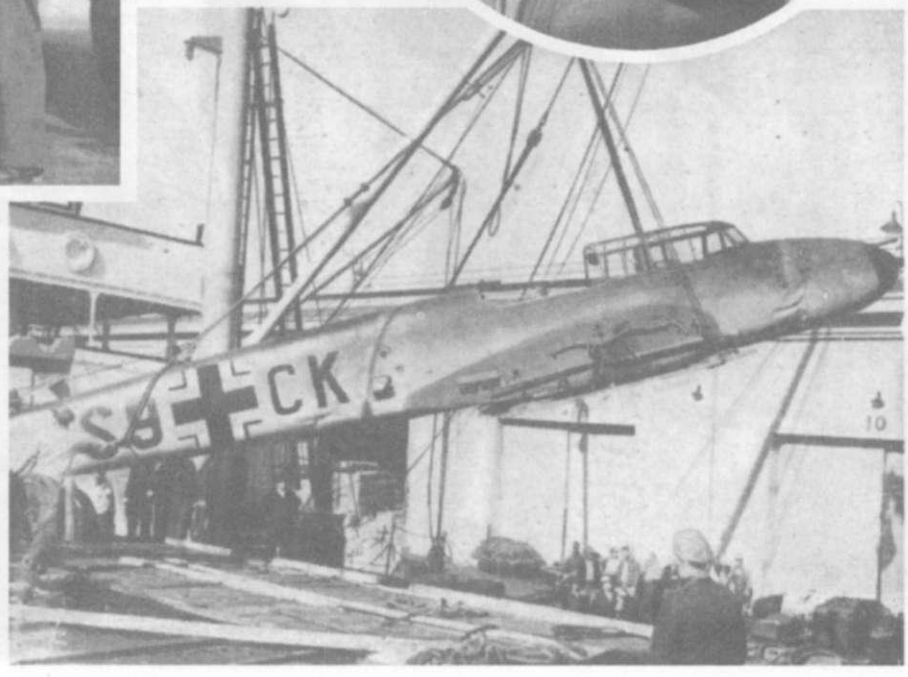
Voluntary helpers are seen outside the temporary offices of the Lord Mayor's Fund and W.V.S. at Plymouth with gifts sent to air-raid sufferers from all parts of the kingdom.

DRAKE was once Mayor of the city with which his name is for ever associated, and there, as we see, his spirit lives on; witness the undaunted morale of these elderly folk and children, waiting to be moved from a bombed district, and the sailor lending a helping hand. *Photos, "News Chronicle," L.N.A. and Associated Press*

U.S. 'Plane Production Getting Into High Gear

Right: Maurice Summers, one of our chief test pilots, who recently flew back from the U.S.A. in a new American machine in the amazing time of seven and a half hours.

Below: Messerschmitt 110, shot down over Britain undamaged and sent to the U.S. for examination by the Vultee Aircraft Corporation, at moment of disembarkation.



Mechanic at Boeing factory, Seattle, explaining adjustments on bomber destined for Britain to R.A.F. pilots. Top photo: Boeing aircraft with R.A.F. symbols already painted on them.

Photos, Associated Press, Keystone and G.P.U.

AEROPLANES are first among the "tools" that are coming in increasing numbers from the United States. In spite of German denials the ferrying system is highly successful, only one aeroplane so far having been lost. Every effort is being made to improve on existing types, and it is a notable fact that the Vultee Aircraft Corporation, after careful study of a Messerschmitt 110 sent to the U.S.A. for inspection, report that at least four American-made fighter- planes are equal to, and in some respects superior to, Nazi aircraft. The four British pilots seen in the above photograph are flying bombers back to this country. Left to right, they are W. Brown, A Sherwood, A. Buckton and Bert Unwin.

I Was There! .... Eye Witness Stories of the War

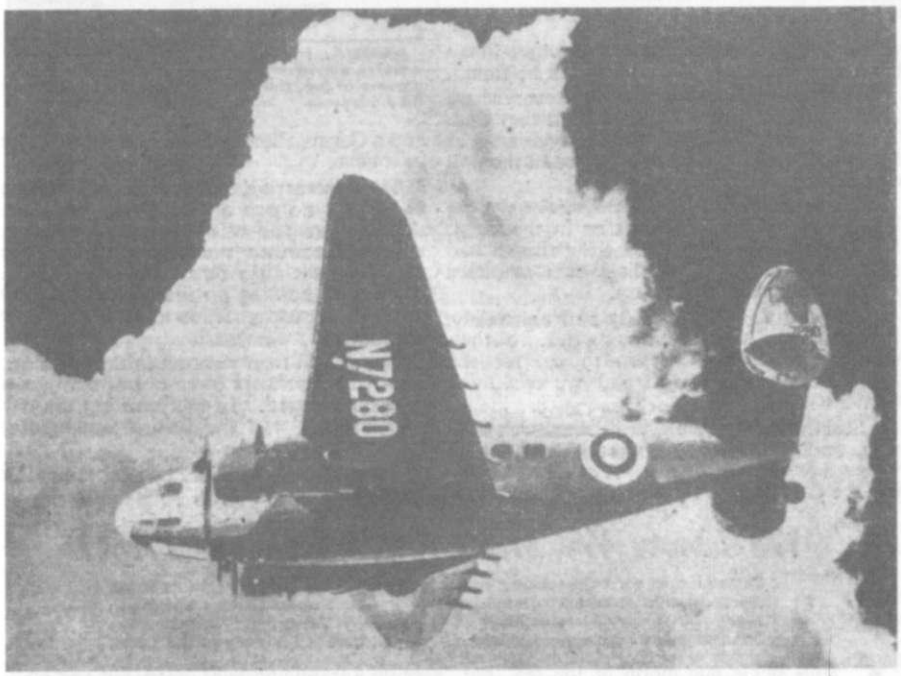
I Did the Transatlantic 'Hop' with American Bombers

Lord Beaverbrook announced on April 23, 1941, that of the stream of bombers ferried across the Atlantic since the autumn, only one aircraft had been lost. The story of one of the American pilots engaged in this arduous service is reprinted here by arrangement with "Life" magazine.

OUR job since November 1940 has been to fly Lockheed Hudson bombers across the Atlantic. Recently we have begun flying even bigger four-engined Consolidated B 24s.

We pilots hail from the United States, England, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Norway and Egypt.

I was in the first flight of Lockheeds to England (*see* pp. 98, 99 of this vol.). It had few of the trappings of an historic event. It had snowed earlier that day and we spent part of the morning clearing ice and snow from our planes while ploughs swept the great macadam surface of the main runways clean.



THE LOCKHEED HUDSON, an American twin-engined general reconnaissance bomber, fitted with two Wright Cyclone engines, is being flown across the Atlantic in large numbers. In the opposite page are other photographs relating to America's aeroplane effort on behalf of Britain.

Ground crews scurried around the planes, checked the 1,200 horse-power engines and filled the two extra fuel tanks which each plane carried.

Then Captain Donald C. T. Bennett, R.A.F., in command of our flight, in plane No. 1, called us together. He handed each pilot the latest weather reports. Flight plans and route were discussed and agreed upon. To identify ourselves as British to each other, to other planes and ships, each crew was handed a Verey pistol with a combination of variously coloured flares to be changed at hourly intervals. Each plane, likewise, received its secret code number, which was also changed hourly. As a result it is almost impossible for a German plane, ship, or radio station to pass itself off as British by code or flare.

In a last word, Bennett cautioned us against flying over ships or towns lest we were fired on by mistake. Then, with a crisp "Thumbs up, good luck," he ordered us into our planes.

Comic relief was afforded by the sight of the pilots coming out to enplane. Our wool-lined flying suits had not yet arrived, so each man was dressed according to his own sartorial tastes. Some of the men wore business suits, others tweed sports jackets! One Australian wore a beaver hat, and many of the men had skiing outfits. We looked as though we were heading for a costume ball instead of a Transatlantic hop.

Bennett flashed a signal light and took off. At minute intervals the rest of us followed. At a pre-arranged height we levelled off, flying in wide echelon formation. It was a relief to be off at last across the Big Pond.

"George," the automatic Sperry Gyro pilot, flies us, but we were kept busy watching Bennett's tail lights, checking and logging our instruments every half-hour and keeping radio and navigation logs in minute detail. A constant worry is checking to make certain that the remaining gasoline in our tanks is equally distributed to help to balance the plane. About midway across we had a midnight snack of tomato soup, coffee and chocolate bars. Occasionally we rested on our cots. Contrary to some fanciful accounts that have appeared, we did not fly in the stratosphere. At high altitudes we inhaled oxygen through rubber tubes in our mouths. The taste of the rubber was sickening, and on the first trip I vomited three times. Now we use Mayo oxygen masks.

These British ferry pilots at Seattle, Washington, headquarters of the Boeing Aircraft Company, are about to ferry over huge four-engined Boeing "Flying Fortresses," travelling first to Canada before crossing the ocean. *Photo, Wide World*

Five hours out we ran into heavy clouds and everyone lost track of Bennett. It was every plane for itself the rest of the way and our plane crossed the ocean first.

Although we made bad time after land was sighted, we set an over-water Transatlantic record of 8 hours 57 minutes.

After delivering the bomber to Britain I came back to Canada by boat. Soon we will be ferried back on transport planes and by the summer, with better weather and more planes, each of us should be flying the Big Pond three or four times a month.

My second Transatlantic flight began about Christmas. When we were out six and a half hours everyone lost sight of Bennett in a cloudbank. Each pilot flew the rest of the way alone, and as this was the second time the flight group had become separated we now always make the entire trip solo.

After losing sight of Bennett our plane cruised, sometimes at a great height, and at other times skimmed the tops of the waves at 50 ft. When we were two hours from one of the spots toward which we were heading we received a radio report that Germans were bombing the neighbourhood. Accordingly we changed destination and soon were taxiing down at a British base. The ground crew had not been told to expect us, but these Transatlantic hops have already become so uneventful that when I stepped out the ground staff just said "Hallo." Then they rolled the plane away and I sent my wife the customary cable: "One hundred per cent crossing." Flying bombers across is done almost as nonchalantly as this.

In Greece We Got Our Revenge for Calais

One British tank unit in Greece fought day and night for over ten days in the northern passes, wrecking 15 German tanks and bringing down 11 planes without loss to themselves. Here are some of the officers' experiences as told to a British United Press correspondent.

THE tank unit which distinguished itself in Greece was one which came out of Calais in the summer of 1940 with only seven officers and 15 men surviving. Telling of his experiences in Greece, one of the officers remarked, "We got some of our revenge for last year."

They first met the brunt of the German push in the Florina region after the German break through at Monastir. Later, when the German planes attacked, they stood their ground and met the oncoming armoured forces with concentrated fire from their guns.

The officers, worn out, were enthusiastic about the way their unit had come through.

"You must have had a close shave, Jim," said one major to a captain. "Wasn't it your tank barring the way at that little bridge near Grevena when the Germans rushed it?"

Captain Jim grinned, and said it was.

"But I'd had the bridge well taped for hours," he said. "My gunner had probably

I WAS THERE!

never fired more than a dozen rounds, but I trained the gun myself square on the centre of the bridge.

"I held my fire until Jerry was so close that if he had fired he would have blown me back to Blighty. Then I ordered the gunner to fire. He pulled the trigger and the shell went through the leading tank, then pierced the second. There was a terrific explosion, the bridge collapsed and the other Huns pulled out quickly."

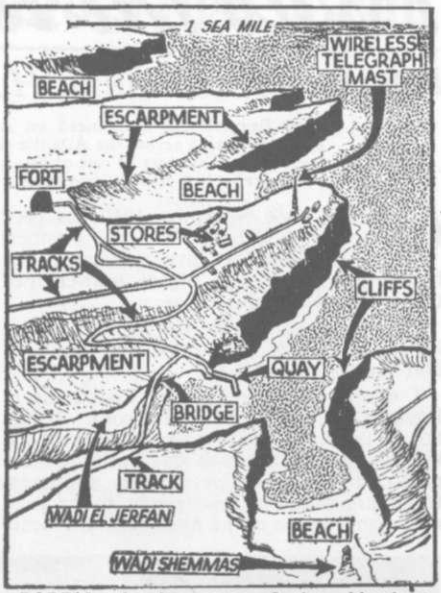
Another officer said: "Dive-bombers made it pretty hot for us. One bomb went off a few feet from my machine and nearly capsized it; but that wasn't half the trouble. We fired our guns so fast that my brain began to feel like a scrambled egg.

"My tanks brought down two German 'planes with Bren-gun fire. The gunners were firing continuously, not only at the tanks but at other auxiliary machines, too.

"I spoke to one private whose gun was red-hot and congratulated him on winging a low-flying fighter," said the officer. "He answered, 'Thanks, sir. I'm pretty tired and I can't shoot as I'd like to, but there's so many of them and they're coming so low that I just can't help hitting them.'"

Another officer described how he had seen German shock troops advancing with arms locked behind the tanks which were coming down the snake-like road under heavy gunfire.

"Our tanks squatting on the plain looked like toads in the setting sun," he said. "But the guns were pointed the right way. When Jerry came up we let drive together with rapid fire. It played hell with Jerry. Then we pulled out, because we knew we were outnumbered."



BARDIA, showing some of the objectives which a British landing-party destroyed under cover of fog, the Nazis being taken completely by surprise. *Courtesy of the "News Chronicle"*

'The British Did a Good Job at Bardia'

A remarkable tribute to the British landing-party who, on the night of April 19-20, did invaluable demolition work at Bardia, was paid by a German war correspondent who witnessed the capture of those of the British who failed to re-embark. Both his and the British official stories are given below.

A BRITISH statement issued on April 23 announced that "on the night of April 19-20 a British force with special demolition materials was landed near Bardia. They had a definite plan to carry out: to destroy an important bridge, a dump of stores, and to do the maximum amount of damage possible to the coastal defence guns.

The bridge was blown up, the dump consisted of stores particularly valuable to the enemy and was left burning fiercely, and four coast defence guns were made useless.

The Italians claim to have captured the whole of the raiding party. This statement is untrue. The major part of the raiding party embarked safely and returned to their base, but about 60 of its members failed to re-embark, and their capture has been claimed by the enemy."

In a broadcast from Berlin, a German war correspondent said:

On the night following April 19 about midnight, a radio call for help was received at headquarters from a German mobile radio unit somewhere near the beach. "British troops are landing," said the S O S. "The radio station is encircled. Send help." Shock battalions were formed at once.

The British had done their work magnificently. Their boots were soled with rubber, and they had moved on to the beach and cliffs so silently that nothing betrayed their presence. These noiseless and invisible British soldiers were somewhere in the fog within reach, but they could not be found.

German troops were searching everywhere in every corner, but nothing could they find. They became anxious for their comrades at the mobile radio unit, for they found the unit empty.

Then suddenly heavy detonations were heard and red flames leapt up in the night. Later it was discovered that the British had succeeded in reaching their own munition dump and had blown it up.

They had done it quickly and noiselessly. It was a really good piece of work. But the dumps were quite useless to us, for the ammunition was British and we could not have used it.

Still the hours passed, while the search went on, and we achieved no results until there were a few bursts of fire. A soldier shouted in the darkness, "I think I have got them," and a German lieutenant raced to the entrance of a cave.

The lieutenant shouted in English, "Come out," but no one answered from the cave. A hand grenade was thrown in, and then, one after another, the British soldiers came out, with their tin hats nonchalantly tilted. They were holding up their hands, but they were big, strong fellows, and they were magnificently equipped.

The search then went on in the same area, and British soldiers came out of many caves and surrendered. In the morning the work was finished, and the British landing force had been captured.

We captured a major, two captains, three lieutenants and 65 men.

We Know We Made Vital Hits at Tripoli

So sudden was the devastating naval attack on Tripoli just before dawn on April 21 that it was 15 minutes before the first shore battery opened in reply. A special correspondent of the "Daily Telegraph" watched the bombardment from one of our warships, and here is his story of the scene.

A THIN sickle late moon lit the sea, but Tripoli, some six or eight miles away, gleamed eerily in the light of dozens of descending flares. I have never seen such a display of fireworks. With their quick-firing Breda guns the Italian harbour defences sent up a frantic blaze of green, red and white tracers which weaved patterns round the flares that hung like baleful lanterns in the sky.

Yet, despite the fact that it looked like one of Brock's set pieces over the town, I did not see a single flare shot down. As they burnt out, Fleet Air Arm machines, droning overhead, dropped ever-fresh clusters.

The harbour defences had already been harassed throughout the night by R.A.F. bombers, and there is little doubt that the whole defence was concentrated on the possibility of fresh air attack to the exclusion of other forms of offensive.

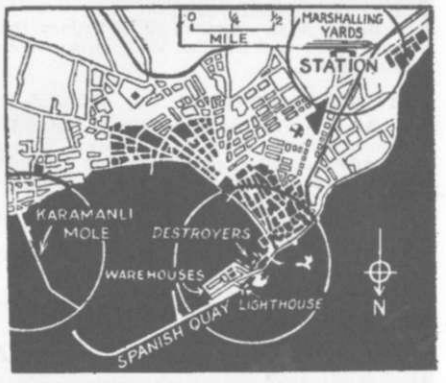
As I stood in darkness on the bridge of my ship, my eyes got sufficiently accustomed to the conditions to pick out other huge shapes like ours carefully checking their course through the minefields. That done, intricate calculations of range, already worked out, were themselves checked and re-checked, for each ship had specific target areas where the maximum amount of damage could be done.

As 5 a.m. approached on Monday, April 21, I knew from previous experience of similar operations that Tripoli was going to suffer an inferno of fire such as it had never before known. At 5 to the second our battleships opened with broadsides which echoed angrily

ON GUARD IN BARDIA after General Wavell's Libyan victory. The fortune of war has, however, put Bardia again in possession of the enemy—but only precariously, for a British force landed in the neighbourhood on the night of April 19-20 and destroyed a bridge, in addition to doing other important damage. *Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright*

I WAS THERE!

TRIPOLI, the waterfront of which is seen above, is the main Italian supply base in Northern Africa. At dawn on April 21 it was heavily bombarded by units of the British Mediterranean Fleet, as related in this page. Extensive damage was done to military objectives shown in the plan, right, by 530 tons of shells. Several enemy ships were sunk and hits were made on the Spanish Quay and the Karamanli Mole. *Photo, Topical. Plan, Courtesy of "Daily Mail"*



back and forth between the folds of the distant coast. Splashes of fire, springing up on the illuminated horizon that was Tripoli, told their own grim story of bursting 15-in. shells. Then the remainder of the fleet joined in.

Precisely four minutes after the beginning of the bombardment my ship crossed the line, and our first salvo rocked us from stem to stern.

I have tried to tell before of the awe-inspiring, even frightening, majesty of night bombardment as experienced from the right end of these monstrous guns. Let it suffice to say, then, that our gunnery officer described it as the finest "shoot" he had ever done.

We knew we were hitting the enemy vitally, for after the first few salvos the brilliance began to die out of the display of tracer shells patterning the sky around our flares. They got ragged and only came in short spurts.

It was obvious that those who retained the courage to man their guns on shore were ducking between their shelters and their posts amid the showers of our projectiles.

Bigger anti-aircraft guns were equally uncertain, and the sparkle of their bursting shells high in the sky stopped altogether at times when things began to get too hot for them.

The procession of our big battleships steaming unperturbed along the enemy coast, pouring in their broadsides, had proceeded without interruption for a quarter of an hour before the enemy shore batteries appeared to wake up. Then a noise like a cartload of bricks being dropped suddenly behind me warned us of their counter-fire.

Now and again the whine of shell splinters seemed unpleasantly close as they sang their mournful chorus through us in the dark night, but more often the shells hummed high overhead; and that, if you can command sufficient presence of mind, assures you they are well past.

Now, as we turned to steam back on our course, the great guns swung silently to starboard and a new deluge of death began to fall towards Tripoli.

Soon the pall of smoke and dust, hanging like a solid wall between our flares and the town below, began to be tinged underneath with a lurid glow. Fires were taking hold of shipping in the harbour. Soon these fires brightened like an angry dawn over the town.

Light tracer shell-fire faded away altogether, and only here and there did the forlorn spark of a heavier anti-aircraft gun flash for a second skywards. We seemed to have cracked the morale of the defenders.

Even the fire of the shore batteries became incidental. We, meanwhile, pounded away like giants forging some new destiny, oblivious of the protests of a mere midget race of men.

At the end of fifty minutes the "Cease fire" came, but there was unceasing tension. We expected the enemy would now give us his portion, but not a single shot came back to answer us and the leviathans of the Fleet were allowed to proceed uninterrupted.

What I Saw of India's Great New Arsenal

Impressive evidence of India's ever-growing war resources was gathered by Reuters' special correspondent who paid a visit to the site of India's latest and most up-to-date arsenal, set among hills and encircled by block-houses.

I HAVE just paid a visit to the site of India's latest and most up-to-date arsenal which a year ago was part of a vast rolling countryside. As I passed through the closely guarded gates, protected by a double line of high steel railings, I saw 20,000 coolies at work completing the construction of new buildings and roads.

I was first of all taken to a high vantage-point in the middle of the grounds to obtain a general view of the arsenal. Like a huge, sinuous snake the surrounding metal railings, some 12 feet high, curved up the hills and down the valleys which are a feature of the local countryside, completely encircling the arsenal and guarding it from unauthorized intruders. Squat block-houses, from which a constant watch is kept, could be seen at strategic points on hilltops overlooking the arsenal.

The magazines themselves were cunningly recessed in the hillsides. When the grass and foliage, removed at the time of their construction, has had time to grow again, they should be almost invisible from the air, and I was told that they are virtually bomb-proof.

Elsewhere were small buildings designed for fusing ammunition. This is done at some distance from the magazines to avoid the possibility of accidents. All are connected with an elaborate system of roads and railway sidings.

I was then shown one of the magazines. Massively constructed of reinforced concrete, it has heavy steel doors opening into a long, low room painted in gleaming white and brilliantly lighted. Strong pillars support the roof, on which automatic fire-extinguishing devices are fitted.

Before me were rows upon rows of neatly stacked bombs, painted a dull yellow. Most of them were heavy calibre bombs, and with their tapering noses pointing to the ceiling they seemed full of silent menace. The other magazines, I was told, contain various types of munitions, and each has its own railway platform and siding.

Our Diary of the War

SUNDAY, APRIL 27, 1941 *603rd day*

Air.—Daylight attacks on factory and camp near Cologne, docks at Ymuiden and aerodrome at De Kooy. Enemy patrol vessel off Brittany hit.

War against Italy.—Enemy troops which had penetrated five miles across Egyptian frontier were halted by British tanks.

Sudan Defence Corps captured Socota, Abyssinia. R.A.F. damaged motor transport and fired petrol dump at Alomata.

Home.—Slight day activity over S.E. coast. Heavy bombs fell at night on Portsmouth. One raider destroyed.

Balkan War.— German forces entered Athens. British withdrawal continuing.

MONDAY, APRIL 28 *604th day*

Sea.—H.M. minesweeper Elgin destroyed a Heinkel without casualty or damage.

Air.—Coastal Command attacked two enemy destroyers escorting supply ships off Dutch coast. Day raids on Emden, shipping off France and Holland, factories, docks, and aerodromes in Holland.

Night attacks on Scharnhorst and Gneisenau lying at Brest.

War against Italy.—R.A.F. attacked number of Junkers embarking troops at Benina. One aircraft destroyed, seven others damaged, and many casualties. Heavy night raids on aerodromes at Benina and Derna, and on Benghazi.

Home.—Day raid on coastal district in N.E. Scotland. Bombs also fell on E. and N.E. coasts of England. Heavy night attack on Plymouth. Enemy also over East Anglia. Four raiders destroyed.

Balkan War.—Announced in Sydney that evacuation of Australian troops from Greece had begun.

TUESDAY, APRIL 29 *605th day*

Air.—Fighter command made offensive sweeps over coast of northern France. Bombers attacked enemy shipping off coasts of France, Belgium and Norway. One supply ship set on fire and four others damaged.

Night attack in force on Mannheim. Oil stores at Rotterdam bombed.

War against Italy.—In Sollum area enemy invaders being harassed by our patrols.

Home.—Enemy day activity in areas near S.E. coast and other points. Another severe night attack on Plymouth. Eight raiders destroyed. Dover shelled for five hours.

Balkan War.—Evacuation of Greece proceeding.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30 *606th day*

Air.—Daylight harassing of enemy shipping off Dutch coast. Norwegian radio station bombed. Main night attack on Kiel. Other targets were in Berlin area, industrial centre of Hamburg and port of Emden.

War against Italy.—Enemy penetrated outer defences of Tobruk. British patrols active in Sollum area. R.A.F. heavily bombed transport in Cyrenaica.

In Abyssinia operations aim at linking up northern and southern columns converging on Amba Alagi, where enemy holds defensive positions.

Balkan War.—Withdrawal from Greece continuing.

THURSDAY, MAY 1 *607th day*

Air.—Day attacks on submarine base at Den Helder, oil tanks at Vlaardingen and shipping off Dutch coast.

War against Italy.—C.-in-C. Mediterranean announced that naval units had bombarded troops and supplies at El Gazala, Libya.

Enemy continued to attack outer defences of Tobruk. British counter-attacked, supported by R.A.F., and destroyed 11 tanks.

R.A.F. bombed Benghazi, aerodrome at Benina, transport at Acroma.

In Abyssinia British occupied Bahrbar and Debub. Heavy R.A.F. attack on enemy positions at Amba Alagi, Alomata and fort in Falaga Pass.

Home.—Small-scale daylight activity; bombs fell at one point on South Coast. At night raiders were over Merseyside and other areas. One shot down.

Iraq.—More British troops reported to have landed in Basra.

FRIDAY, MAY 2 *608th day*

Air.—R.A.F. bombed Hamburg, Emden and oil stores at Rotterdam.

War against Italy.—Tobruk holding out against violent all-day attacks. Two enemy bombers shot down. R.A.F. made night attack on Benina, destroying two troop-carriers and damaging others.

In Abyssinia British occupied Fike.

R.A.F. attacked convoy of merchant vessels in Mediterranean, scoring hits on three and on escorting destroyers.

Home.—Another large-scale night raid on Merseyside. Six enemy aircraft destroyed.

Balkans.—Announced that evacuation from Greece was over, and that 43,000 men had been withdrawn.

Iraq.—Cantonment at Habbaniya attacked by Iraqi troops, forcing British to take counter action. Iraqi Air Force tried unsuccessfully to raid aerodrome. Rutbar, near Haifa pipeline, occupied by Iraqis.

British forces occupied airport, dock area and power station at Basra.

SATURDAY, MAY 3 *609th day*

Sea.—Admiralty announced that after evacuation from Greece two destroyers, Diamond and Wryneck, had been sunk.

Armed merchant cruiser Voltaire overdue and considered lost.

Air.—R.A.F. heavily bombed industrial centre of Cologne. Smaller attacks made on Essen, Düsseldorf and oil tanks at Rotterdam. Scharnhorst and Gneisenau in Brest docks were again attacked; also docks at Cherbourg and Boulogne and aerodrome at Le Touquet. Other forces bombed oil tanks and aerodrome in southern Norway.

War against Italy.—Enemy attack on Tobruk brought to standstill by artillery fire. In Sollum area British mechanized forces carried out successful raid. R.A.F. raided Benina and Benghazi.

In Debub sector, Abyssinia, Indian troops occupied Emadani and Uelthert.

Reported that R.A.F. had sunk enemy destroyer and a freighter in Mediterranean.

Home.—Third successive night attack on Merseyside. Many casualties and much damage done. Bombs fell at many other points of Britain. Sixteen raiders destroyed.

Iraq.—Fighting in progress between British and Iraqis at Habbaniya. Pipe-line to Haifa reported to have been cut.

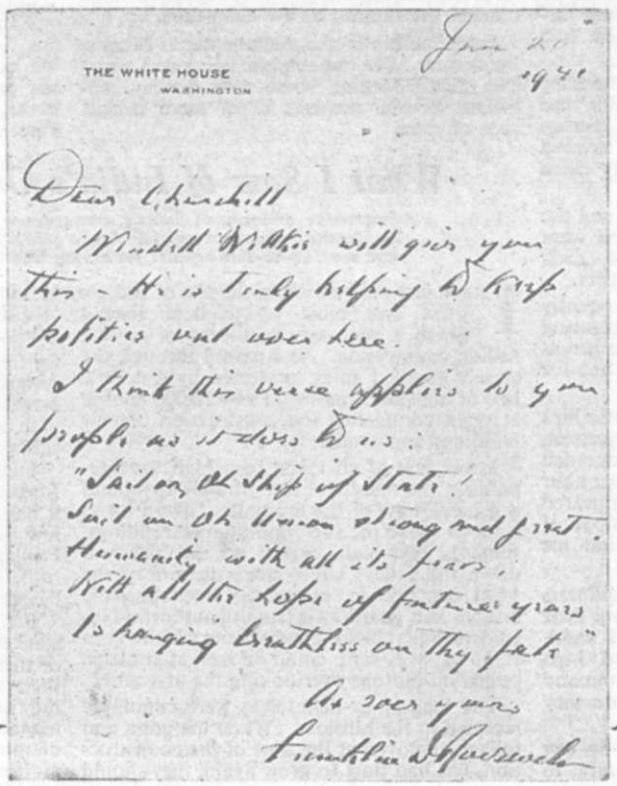
R.A.F. heavily attacked petrol dumps and magazines at Moascar Rashid, Iraqi aerodrome outside Baghdad.

FROM ONE GREAT DEMOCRAT TO ANOTHER

ROOSEVELT to CHURCHILL

FORTUNATE indeed is it that in this supreme hour Britain and the U.S.A. should be captained by democrats cast in heroic mould. President Roosevelt echoed our Premier's mood when he concluded his personal letter to Mr. Churchill with a quotation from Longfellow. The document, brought over by Mr. Wendell Willkie last January, has been issued by the Ministry of Information, and a facsimile is reproduced on the right. "I think this verse applies to your people as it does to us," wrote the President.

Sail on, Oh Ship of State!
Sail on, Oh Union strong and great.
Humanity with all its fears,
With all the hope of future years
Is hanging breathless on thy fate.



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

June 21
1941

Dear Churchill

Wendell Willkie will give you this - He is truly helping to keep politics out over here.

I think this verse applies to your people as it does to us:

"Sail on, Oh Ship of State!
Sail on Oh Union strong and great.
Humanity with all its fears,
With all the hope of future years
Is hanging breathless on thy fate."

As ever yours
Franklin D. Roosevelt

CHURCHILL to the NATION

THE Premier, broadcasting to the nation on the evening of Sunday, April 27, on the war situation, concluded with an extract from the poem by Arthur Hugh Clough, "Say not the struggle nought availeth," which, Mr. Churchill might have added, applies equally to America and to us.

For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,
Seem here no painful inch to gain,
Far back, through creeks and inlets making,
Comes silent, flooding in, the main,

And not by eastern windows only
When daylight comes, comes in the light
In front, the sun climbs slow, how slowly,
But westward, look, the land is bright.